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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NAIROBI 001133

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DEPT FOR AF/E AND A/S FRAZER

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: Somalia - Hawiye Clan Meeting

Classified by PolOff Mitch Benedict for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

1 (SBU) Summary -- Members of the Hawiye clan held a conference in Mogadishu on March 6 to discuss their collective clan interests and how they might contribute to peace and stability in Somalia. Following the meeting, Ethiopian Military commanders in Mogadishu hosted the Hawiye elders and politicians for a lunch reception. End Summary.

12. (SBU) The Hawiye clan held a conference March 6 for close to 300 participants, including prominent traditional elders, religious leaders, scholars, and intellectuals from its various sub-clans. Organizers claimed it was a landmark meeting and the biggest ever by the Hawiye. The participants attributed the current Mogadishu crisis to the presence of Ethiopian troops who are in Somalia illegally, they said. The meeting was called in order to overcome obstacles to peace and order.

13. (SBU) Participants said that the Hawiye are not opposed to the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) per se, but to its ways of doing business -- militaristic, uncompromising, and totally detached from the people and the reality on the ground, as they put it. On the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC), participants stated, there were no clans currently in conflict in Somalia, thus eliminating the need for social reconciliation. What is required, they said, is genuine political reconciliation and the TFG must address this.

Hawiye Recommendations

14. (SBU) At the close of the meeting, which reportedly lasted over 18 hours, the Hawiye group put forth a number of demands to the Somali people, TFG, and the international community. They appealed to the Somali people to unite and guard against drifting back into renewed civil war and anarchy. They called on the TFG to: stop shelling residential areas, suspend the emergency law, connect better with people before the NRC, pull back the "Puntland Militia" from Mogadishu and constitute a fairly balanced national army, develop a disarmament policy and disarm all communities simultaneously, and make future appointments of provincial administrators through a consultative process. Finally, they asked the international Community: to pressure Ethiopia to withdraw its forces from Somalia, to foster the holding of a genuinely all-inclusive NRC in which all interested parties can freely express their feelings without fear of reprisal and at a pre-agreed neutral venue, to be cautious and not lend blanket support to the TFG, and to continue providing humanitarian assistance.

Ethiopians Host the Hawiye

15. (SBU) The Hawiye Conference comes after a series of sub-clan meetings of the Haber Gedir, Abgaal and Morasade in Mogadishu and Banadir Province. On March 7, following the internal Hawiye meeting, Ethiopian top military commanders invited Hawiye elders and politicians for a lunch reception. According to a participant, the Ethiopian officials took the opportunity to allay fears that Ethiopia is taking sides in its efforts and reaffirmed their neutrality in their engagements in Somalia. In addition, they reiterated that Ethiopian troops were prepared to withdraw in the wake of the AMISOM deployment and would remain in Somalia only as long as the TFG needs them.

16. (SBU) In attendance also were former Mogadishu warlords -- now part of the TFG -- including Musa Sudi, Qanyare Afrah and Abdi Qeybdid. Allegedly, all of them spoke at the meeting, but Abdi Qeybdid was more candid, referring to the ousted Islamists as terrorists and some of the elders as their sympathizers. On the other hand, Qanyare, who felt his sub-clan was not fully represented in the Hawiye conference, expressed his full endorsement and support for the communique on the Hawiye meeting, which was issued during the Ethiopian lunch reception offered by the Commanders of Ethiopian forces in Mogadishu.

Comment

17. (C) Generally, except for TFG-insiders, what we hear from all Somali groups is broad dissatisfaction with the TFG's inability or unwillingness to communicate with the Somali public on its vision, plans, and actions -- in all areas, including security, development, and reconciliation. However, starting this week, the Somali Embassy in Nairobi plans to hold a weekly media conference every Wednesday (Septel). The purpose is to brief the media and the public in

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general about developments in Somalia and the TGG's efforts to bring and sustain peace and stability in Somalia. We plan to use our close contacts with the Embassy to help guide and shape the content of their messages to the media.
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